Issue 130 March 2016

KNOTTING MATTERS

The Magazine of the International Guild of Knot Tyers

INTERNATIONAL GUILD OF KNOT TYERS

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Cut-off date for Summer Solstice Issue receipt of copy is Tuesday May 10, 2016
Cut-off date for Autumnal Equinox Issue receipt of copy is Tuesday, August 09, 2016,

Front Cover** **Members - your work is amazing! Front covers, Issues 101 to 129. Thank you! - Ed.

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MEMBERSHIP QUERIES

Membership Queries

e-Mail Address: An individual e-mail address is essential to enable an individual account to be created. Unfortunately, if you do not have an e-mail address, you will not be able to access the member's area of the web site.

Web site: All members (with an e-mail address) can access the "Members Only" area of the web site. If you have not chosen a username already, it will automatically be set as your e-mail address. New members will be sent a password automatically. For longer-standing members, you may need to be set up individually. Try to access with your e-mail address and click "forgotten password". If you are still unable to log in, e-mail membership@igkt.net and I will be able to help.

Membership Renewals: The membership is gradually moving to an online database. The online database will send out subscription renewal reminders – please do NOT take out a new subscription. If you have problems renewing, please e-mail membership@igkt.net and we can request the necessary changes from our web designer.

Membership Number: Your membership number is printed alongside your name on the envelope containing your Knotting Matters. It would be helpful if you could quote this on any correspondence and when you are renewing your membership. If renewing by PayPal, however, it is not essential, and you can renew without.

Data Protection: I am often asked for member information by Group Secretaries/contacts. In order to comply with Data Protection, I am not able to share information in this way. If IGKT members wish to join a local Branch, then they must contact the Branch directly. To this end, it would help if the following information could be included [***from you***] in Knotting Matters:

Branch name
Branch area (please include all counties/states included)
Branch Secretary contact details

If Group contacts send this information to membership@igkt.net , I will compile and send it to Knotting Matters, and could possibly include with the welcome pack which is sent to every new member.

Signed,
Caroline Sandrey
Membership Secretary

Letters to The Editor
The Things You Say!!

A call out to all IGKT Members

The IGKT is currently in the process of developing a new "youth section" within our website. This area will contain knotting ideas, games, and tutorials, geared for children from ages 5 to 16+. The purpose of this site is to provide the tools for anyone who works with children, and who may or may not have limited knotting skills. At the same time, we hope that this area will become a recruiting tool for the Guild. Adults who work with children may become interested in knot tying and eventually become "addicted" in the same way as we are.

More importantly, this will also serve to introduce youth of all ages to knot tying and the personal satisfaction of “creating” useful objects with a mere “piece of string”. The long term future of the Guild rests with our youth and it is the IGKT’s (and its members’) responsibility to ensure the Guild’s survival, so that our art is never forgotten.

I would ask that our membership share, with the Guild, any crafts, games, and tutorials that you have in your knotting arsenal. Have a craft or knotting idea but don’t know how to make a tutorial? No worries! If you can send me some details, I would be more than happy to prepare a tutorial. The person submitting will receive full credit (unless otherwise requested). Please email all information to:

Southern.ontario.knotyers@gmail.com

Thank you for your continued support,
John Staley

Dear Editor,
Thank you for publishing my two articles in issue 128, Sept. 2015 and your normal editorial corrections to my imperfect text. However I must protest at having my titles changed. This should never happen except with the author’s agreement. All the articles that members publish in K.M. are the result of serious knotting research. Even book publishers will seek to persuade an author that a change of title would be beneficial, and they have [a] stronger hand, because [it] is their money they are risking to bring the book to publication.

The section heading “How I did it” has always jarred with me, somehow it never seems to sit right in my mind. However, it is your absolute right, as editor, to choose section headings as you wish. However to incorporate this heading into an altered version of my title is really too much. I would very much appreciate if you could find space sometime to publish a correction. There are also some typographical errors -:

1. My name is Roger (without a ‘D’).
2. P. 13 line 2. – The insertion of – (ADK) – is fine, and thanks, but line 2. should continue with the closed bracketed addendum :-
(also known as “The Euro Death Knot” (EDK) !!)?
The bits missing are the double exclamation marks and the opening / closing brackets. The point is to emphasize the slightly amusing finger - pointing apparently going on across the Atlantic Pond, as to whom was responsible for advocating use of this dreadful knot. I believed the addendum would convey this thought without the use of a lot of extra text, which in itself, would not add greatly to the article, as a whole.
3. The title on page 13 should be :
“Upon: The Double Snowdrop Bend” and that on P.29 should be:
“Upon: “The Racoon Hitch” The whole titles were fully underlined as is normal practice for titles. But here I have added enclosing quotation marks round everything to make it quite clear.

Now with all this apparent criticism you might think that I do not appreciate the enormous amount of work and dedication you put into publishing our journal. Nothing could be further from the truth.

So, thank you so much.
Roger Callan

Editor’s Note: The above letter was transcribed from hand-written text supplied to the magazine by its author. My apologies to you. Sometimes words get missed from handwriting, although we do our best. However, do note our comments for future submissions in Issue #129 and in Issue #125. Our decision as to whether or not to publish material as submitted, or formatted and edited to fit the magazine style, is consistent with other publications. The editor is very thankful for the assistance provided by the volunteer who prepared the text. Thank you Gordon! If you do not own or have ready access to a computer or typewriter, consider whether your local library offers such, or whether a transcription service exists nearby.

’Finally’

by
Patrick Spiering

I had a very fortunate conversation with Charlie Bell one day (frankly, I’ve had a lot of these). “Do you know about that gentleman in Louisiana?” he asked. “That frame that he made for his wife is about the most incredible thing that I’ve seen.” I was unfamiliar with him. “Email Martin Combs and ask him for pictures, he will send them to you,” Charlie instructed.

I knew who Martin Combs was. He supplies the hard lay cotton cord (firmer due to being twisted more) that many of us use to make frames, bell ropes and other marlinspike work. Martin sent me pictures, and I was amazed. The frame that Jesse made as an anniversary present for his wife was large, ornate, and very original. I found his address, and sent him a letter expressing my admiration for his work, along with a few questions and my phone number. About a week later my phone rang. “Pat, “he said, “It’s Jesse”. We have been good friends ever since.

Over the last few years I have talked to Jesse many times. He likes to laugh about how cold it gets in Wisconsin compared to his native Louisiana. He has sent me some Louisiana coffee (excellent!) and beignet mix. I have sent him Wisconsin cheese with a shirt that reads, “Eat cheese or die.” Naturally it became a goal of mine to visit him some day. I looked for years for a way to travel to Louisiana to see him. Recently, there was a conference in New Orleans that I wanted to go to. So I was very excited to make travel arrangements with a couple extra days so I could visit Jesse. ***Finally***.

I was warmly welcomed by Jesse and his wife Betty Ann into their home. I was immediately struck by the overwhelming quantity and quality of work in both knot tying and wood.

Around every corner is a piece of work that represents countless hours of craftsmanship. During that day I was able to take pictures of much of his work and browse his large bookshelf full of books on knotting and the age of sail, including books by Basil Lubbock and the Time Life ‘Seafarers’ series. Jesse and his wife even treated me to a Cajun lunch and king cake, a traditional Mardi Gras dessert.

Photo 1 This frame sits in a room to the left immediately after entering the home. Note the bookshelf filled with knot and rope work, all hand done by Jesse.

Photo 2 This frame hangs near the kitchen.

Photo 3 Detail of frame. Can you find the hackamore (jug sling) knots? It is Jesse’s favorite knot and can be found on most all of his work.

Jesse Eaves (‘Scotty’ to his family, his middle name) was born in Independence, Louisiana. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in August of 1958. He attended boot camp in San Diego, CA and was assigned to the fleet oiler USS Platte AO-24. He served in the Deck Department, 1st Division. The ship had been in service since 1958. It was here that Jesse learned to tie knots from older boatswain’s mates. He learned to splice cable, rig blocks and maintain the rigging. The first knot book that Jesse had was a paperback macramé book from the P.C. Herwig Company in Brooklyn, NY. His next book was a 1952 copy of Graumont and Hensel’s Encyclopedia of Knots and Fancy Work. The same book still sits on a shelf in his home. It was his copy of the Encyclopedia that kindled his interest in making frames.

A fleet oiler, like the one he served on, used a cord referred to as ‘shot line’, to pass between ships, which would be tied to fuel lines to connect them between ships. This line was often discarded due to the time that it took to untangle 300 feet. Jesse would take the used shot line, untangle it, and use it to practice knot tying. He used discarded shot line to make his first frame in 1959. The US Navy later changed to an orange colored shot cord, and he made a frame from that as well. [See photos 4 through 8].

Photo 4 This was the first frame made in 1959, with cord that was going to be discarded. Photo 5 Frame detail [R]

Photo 6 [above] A frame made from USN orange shot line. Photo 7 Frame detail [R]

Photo 8 A large collection of belaying pins and decorated fids.

In 1962 Jesse separated from the Navy. He married his wife a year later, started a family and built a home. Jesse worked as a rigger for the Ethyl Corporation in Baton Rouge, Louisiana for 19 years. The DE USS Kidd was set up in Baton Rouge as a memorial at about the same time. Jesse volunteered for the restoration and was able to make full use of his skills and knowledge of deck work, rigging, and canvas work. His volunteer work lasted for 9 years and he worked as a maintenance supervisor for another 12 years.

Jesse continues his knot tying hobby in his home with a room dedicated to his art. His work includes much more than frames. He turns wood and often decorates fids with varnished Turk's heads [Photo 8]. Jesse has had displays in the local library and the state museum in nearby Baton Rouge. He continues to do hands on demonstrations for the local community during pioneer days. As for me, I will continue to look for conferences in Louisiana. [Photo 9]

Photo 9 A frame in the knot tying room. Note the macramé piece to the left as well.

Discworld® Knots

by Geoffrey Budworth

In the early 2000s, I met several times with Bernard Pearson, who masterminded the Discworld Emporium and postal service in Wincanton, Somerset, UK, and oversaw (still does) the production of every kind of Discworld merchandise. He is the ex-policeman, accomplished potter/sculptor, and real-world informant to the author of the Discworld novels, Terry (now the Late Sir Terry) Pratchett who nicknamed him 'cunning artificer'. At Bernard's request, I provided lots of knot lore and data, together with a few tricky-to-tie Fiador knots [ABOK #1110] on the off-chance that Terry might find a use for them.

Bernard also invited the IGKT's Richard Hopkins and Europa Chang to take part in the 2007 Discworld Jamboree, where Terry's readers, devotees and fanatics gathered in the costumes of their favourite characters, and where they discovered the Six Knot Challenge.

Otherwise, nothing seemed to have come from this collaboration … until the appearance of the final Discworld book[1] published after the author's death in March 2015. In it a senior witch named Miss Tick, musing on the bad old days of witch-ducking, recalls how she practised knots at the Quirm College for Young Ladies and *trained* to break her own record for undoing the simple knots with which mobs tied witches. Later we learn that, by the side of her bed, there was a chart showing a variety of knot, as escapology was a useful hobby for a witch. Then, prior to the book's ultimate battle between Discworld's outnumbered witches and an army of invading elves, she creates '*a strange net, a tangle of intricate, carefully woven knots and loops*'. This [tangle] she suspends beneath her broomstick to carry a lot of young Feegles[2] whom she drops over the enemy, one after the other, by pulling loose each knot in turn.

Discworld ® (continued)
Oh yes, and a character not in any earlier Discworld book is introduced, an apprentice male witch whose name is Geoffrey. Coincidence? Most likely. But maybe …

[1] *The Shepherd's Crown*, a Discworld® Novel, by Terry Pratchett, published (September 2015) in GB by Doubleday: ISBN 978-0-857-53481-1

[2] Offspring of the Nac Mac Feegles, a Scottish clan of tiny warriors

∞ oOo ∞

Beachcombing Finds

by
Cazbil

A surprising amount of rope can be found while beach combing, a fun activity in the sunshine Summer or Winter on an empty beach with a dog.

Pics are of an 'as found' splice which speaks for its self. This piece of rope has come from a fishing boat, you may well search for a long time if you expect to find this 'interesting' splice in a book! The perpetrator probably started it as a three strand then realised it was four, and couldn't think what to do with the one left over! If you spend time in or around marinas and boat yards you can find lots of things like this.

You might expect that people who use rope would be proficient with knots; this is not the case. The only exceptions are people like tree surgeons, climbers, etc. Yachtsmen will spend lots of money buying pots of chemicals to paint the ends of rope to stop them fraying and plastic widgets made in China to hang their fenders from, yet there are more knot books around than ever before.

Having said that it took me a long time to get the hang of learning how to tie knots from books. Floris Hin's book was a great help incorporating his novel idea of using three stranded rope of different coloured strands. I discovered a while ago that the teaching of knots in the cubs, not sure about the scouts, wasn't allowed, unless it was for a particular purpose; trouble is there doesn't seem to be many 'purposes' around now, with the advent of aforementioned widgets, ratchet straps, crimps etc.
Best Regards,
Cazbil

Splice seen from the top side (left) with one strand seemingly left out (?) of the four-strand splice

Splice seen from the under side (right) with one strand definitely left out (!)

Walk Softly & Carry a Big Stick

by Patrick Glisson

Man's second invention was the walking stick or staff about 5,000 B.C. His first invention was the rock, as a tool, but some people debate that the stick was used first to uproot the rock. So the debate can go on.

A walking stick or staff can be made with just about any wood, from Bamboo to Hickory to Oak. They can be used simply as an aid in walking, serve as a weapon, be used as a tool, a symbol of authority, and also serve as a record of events. They can be "rough and ready" with the bark still on and cut ends, to "fashionable" with high gloss finishes and brass ends. Either rough, finished or somewhere in between, the stick should reflect the personality of the person who is carrying it. EVERY stick has a story to tell. The story many times includes a nicely tied grip handle knotted from some type of cord. Handles can range from a cord tied in a simple Whipping to fancy and detailed Pineapple knots.

Long before I got in to knots I was a woodworker, and after becoming a Scout leader with my sons I began to work on walking sticks. As many know, walking sticks and knots, i.e. Turk's Heads, go together. I have since presented many sticks to various coworkers, Scouts and leaders, friends and family. Here is a selection of some of my work over the years.

"A Marine's Cane"

Walking stick was done for a friend, a young Marine injured in Afghanistan by an I.E.D. When he first returned stateside he was walking with a short, thin, "old man's" cane that was bending under his weight. I decided he needed a real cane, worthy of a Marine, and I presented him this one. The stick itself is a 38 inch long twist, cleaned of the bark and finished with oil and wax. The top grip is covered with a 12 bight by 13 lead, 2 pass Turk's Head "bag". The grip is tied with black para cord tightened over padding, to provide some degree of comfort, ending with a Hanson loop.

“Maintenance Man’s Staff”

Some sticks are found while out looking for them in the woods or along fence rows; this one was found in the parking lot of a church I attend. After a car slid on ice, and knocked down a tree, the remaining trunk was recovered and cleaned up to reveal a nice stick blank in need of a handle. The handle was tied using a green para type cord in to a 9 bight by 13 lead, 3 pass Turk’s Head followed by a 3 lead, Monkey’s Fist, then a second 13 bight by 3 lead, 2 pass Turk’s Head. This stick was presented to the gentleman who had to repair the damage done by the wreck.

“Momma Buffalo’s Stick”

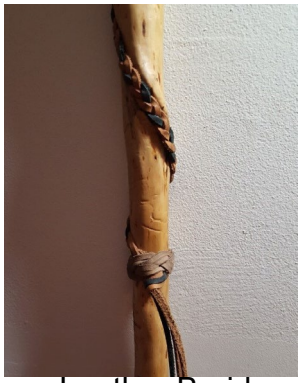
Twist collected from a fence row, cured, cleaned, and then finished with oil and wax. Handle grip is a 5 bight by 7 lead, 3 pass Turk’s Head, ending with a Monkey’s Fist and Hanson Loop. Handle tied with orange Para cord. Presented at a Wood Badge beading ceremony to “Momma Buffalo”.

Tobacco Sticks

Sometimes the material used in the walking stick has as much of a story to tell as the walking stick itself. These were made from hand riven tobacco sticks, used for 50 plus years on a tobacco farm in central Kentucky. Cleaned of 50 plus years of farm dust and decayed wood and then finished with oil and wax. A rubber foot was added to the end to provide traction on smooth surfaces.

The stick on the left has a 5 bight by 16 lead, 3 pass Turk’s Head tied with white cotton cord. The top has a Hanson knot while the bottom ends in a Monkey’s Fist.

The stick on the right was tied with a 5 bight by 3 lead, 2 pass Turk's Head, leading into a simple whipping that then transitions to a second 5 bight 3 lead, 2 pass Turk's Head, ending with a Monkey's Fist.



Leather Braid

Twist, 42 inches long, with a leather grip tied with a two-tone 8 point Star Knot leading in to a continuous Crown Sennit with a 5 bight by 3 lead, 3 pass Turk's Head in the center ending with a second 5 bight by 3 lead, 3 pass Turk's Head [above]. A basic 3 strand flat braid continues down the stick inlaid in the groove left by the vine that caused the twist. The end of the braid is held in place at the bottom by a third 5 bight by 3 lead, 3 pass Turk's Head [above, left]. The end of the braid ends in a simple Over-hand knot with tails trailing. ***[Article continues on p. 31 - Ed]***

TH Periodic Tables

by
Geoffrey Budworth

TH Periodic Tables
the third (and final) article in his Turk's Head trilogy

The table below is a kind of ready-reckoner for the numbers of TH crossing points calculated by multiplying leads (minus 1) and bights up to the maximum of an 11-lead x 20-bight Turk's head knot.

TABLE ONE

	Leads (-1)										
Bights	1-1	2-1	3-1	4-1	5-1	6-1	7-1	8-1	9-1	10-1	11-1
1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2	0	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
3	0	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30
4	0	4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40
5	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
6	0	6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60
7	0	7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70
8	0	8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80
9	0	9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90
10	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
11	0	11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110
12	0	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120
13	0	13	26	39	52	65	78	91	104	117	130
14	0	14	28	42	56	70	84	98	112	126	140
15	0	15	30	45	60	75	90	105	120	135	150
16	0	16	32	48	64	80	96	112	128	144	160
17	0	17	34	51	68	85	102	119	136	153	170
18	0	18	36	54	72	90	108	126	144	162	180
19	0	19	38	57	76	95	114	133	152	171	190
20	0	20	40	60	80	100	120	140	160	180	200

But this bland grid of multiplication tables tends to blur the subtleties of the data displayed, although colouring in specific squares will highlight a few useful aspects, for example, the knots needing two (or more) strands to tie them. Rotate Table One clockwise through 45˚ however (see Table Two below) and the resulting pyramid yields a fresh perspective to intrigue and amuse those KM readers who are data devotees.

TABLE TWO

				1						
			2		2					
		3		4		3				
	4		6		6		4			
5		8		9		8		5		
	6		10		12		10		6	
		7		12		15		16		15		12		7		
	8		14		18		20		20		18		14		8	
9		16		21		24		25		24		21		16		9
10	18		24		28		30		30		28		24		18		10

Akin to Pascal's Triangle, it is easily assembled and may, once its logical layout is understood, be enlarged without reference to Table One. Integers forming the upper (or outward) pair of diverging diagonals increase arithmetically by increments of 1; the second pair of diagonals grow by increments of 2, the third pair by 3 … and so on. Vertically down the middle is a backbone of perfect square numbers, namely 1, 4, 9, 16 and 25. If another row is added, the next number is 36. Flanking this spine, are other 'square' THs, made with either one more lead than bights or vice versa. Narrow (bracelet) THs are located towards the bottom left-hand corner, and long (tubular) THs at the bottom right-hand corner.

So knots – like many other things – can be defined by numbers, and, in the process, will throw up some arithmetical quirks. Table Two has two rare 'perfect' numbers, namely:- 6 (because its factors 1 + 2 + 3 = 6), and 28 (because 1 + 2 + 4 + 7 + 14 = 28). The next would be 496, tied in a (32L-1)x 16B TH or, alternatively, a (17L-1) x 31B knot. Add together the integers in each horizontal row and the following totals emerge:-

1, 4, 10, 20, 35, 56, 84, 120, 165 and 220.

Subtract each total from the one that follows it, and the remainders are:-

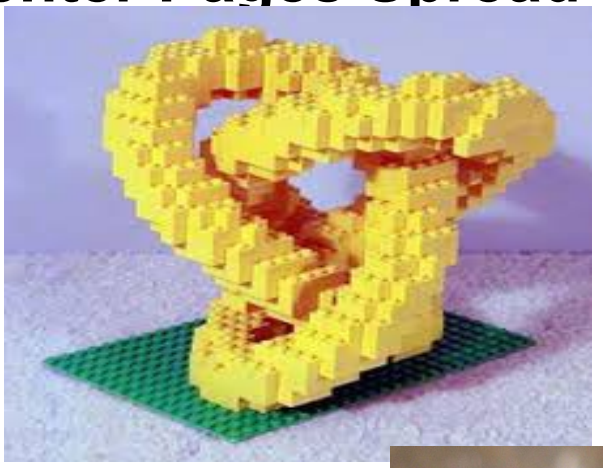
3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 28, 36, 45 and 55,
all of which – curiously – are 'triangular' numbers.

There is more knotty math (as well as some occult numerology) to be found, if you have the mind to do so. What use is it all? Who knows? But the chance to collect and collate knotty data for its own sake must never be neglected, and KM is, for now, the Guild's only publication for such esotericism. Anyway, as the English philosopher & scientist Francis Bacon, 1561-1626) wrote:-

'They are ill discoverers that think there is no land,
when they can see nothing but sea.'

∞ oOo ∞

Center Pages Spread



A few of your editor’s favorite scenes - enjoy!

Rope

by Dr. Mike Howarth

re: Knotting Matters Issue 121 December 2013
Reference: A plea for Help from Jimmy Williams
 Letter to editor

Jimmy & letter to the editor
An idea to support your ideas for IGKT's role in respect of the role of education in your mission statement. I use rope in my teaching lectures and writing to illustrate themes begun around 1993, through inspiration for a PhD in 2003, and in my current consultant work at University College, London.

All the fancy words might best be summed up in the following that IGKTyers could drop into the chat at public events:
"*Making knots is really good for showing how you learn, you know. Each knot has a name. When you hear the name of the knot and use your hands to make the knot, the result is you learn quickly. You practice and think about the name as you go through the sequence. Then when you remember the name, the actions come back to your mind. Ropework demonstrates how we learn. It also demonstrates the value of learning by doing.*"

To parents and adults the words are:
" *Rope words like reef knot, Turks head, and traditional sailors' phrases such as Pipe down, Toe the line,*
(Add your own examples - mine are bitter end and monkeys fist.) Show the way humans learn. These are metaphors that light up the brain and paint vivid pictures in the mind. The metaphors and the physical making together show a child (and adults who have forgotten) how hands-on learning works."

Read ABOK, with Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin novels of life in the British Navy of Nelson's time, and a picture of hands-on learning [then] has relevance to address issues of education in our present culture. I really consider ABOK is worth recognition as a literary gold mine for the teaching profession.

My evidence for the idea of ropework as hands-on learning, and a demonstration of the new understandings of how metaphor works, has been gathered together over the years. With various attempts to put across the blindingly obvious that we have forgotten in our intellectual sophistication.

Here is an early attempt. Try the video
http: www.mhmvr.co.uk site metaphor metaphorvideo1.html

Then there is the Thole Pin Story as published in IGKT Knotting Matters [on p. 14, Issue 114] ... and in the book chapter just published "*Teaching and Learning Online. New Models of Learning for a Connected World*", Volume 2, Edited by Brian Sutton and Anthony Basiel Routledge: http: www.routledge.com books details 9780415528573 Dr Mike Howarth Chapter 11: Metaphor and neuroscience: implications for online learning.

Of course hands-on learning is obvious to IGKTyers. The education world is knot so aware. But sailing so close to the wind, it is often possible knot to see the wood for the trees. (Sorry about the mixed metaphors, but you get the picture!). My most recent attempt is the result of being asked to give a talk at our local sea scouts in Hertford for Trafalgar Day in November 2013. This is another attempt to get the ideas across, with some other notes. Written in a narrative style shown to me by Johnny Morris.

Presentation
Mayoress, Distinguished guests, Officers and cadets, Ladies, and gentlemen, Chairman: Thank you for those kind words. We are here to honour and remember the life of Britain's most famous hero, Admiral Lord Nelson, whose life ended at the battle of Trafalgar over 200 years ago.

I have been asked - actually, lured, here tonight with offers of rum to talk tonight about an aspect of Naval Life. I'd like to demonstrate to you one small but important - indeed essential - aspect of the sailor's skill at the time of Trafalgar & that is the skill with rope. HMS Victory may have had its admiral, its captain, and officers, but Victory was a team effort; the gunners, the carpenters, the surgeon - to name but a few - and what kept the whole lot together was rope and the skill of the riggers and sailors, who had 26 miles of it to look after.

So here are some examples of one aspect of life in the Navy - the sailor's skill with rope. They call it decorative marlinespike seamanship that kept a ship in tip top shape. At Trafalgar, 208 years ago, at 11:45 am, Victory and the Temeraire were drifting side by side. Below decks most of the 820 men were crouching by the guns in the darkness - drifting for those 50 minutes towards the enemy. Struck down in the hold, along with everything else moveable, was each sailor's chest. At each end was a handle [SHOW a becket] [perhaps a] star knot, ringbolt hitching, sennets, turk's heads, coach whipping. This is a reproduction I made for a seaside garden at Chelsea Flower show in 1996, which won top prize, and the sailor's tools each sailor ditty bag with fid marlinspike pricker [SHOW]
here's a length of coir rope with a 8 lead 20 bight turks head for the entrance to the garden.

I know I am talking to the converted. I am sure most of you have the Ashley Book of Knots. All this ropework business started when making my broadcast for children. I interviewed a chap called Des Pawson. This started my hobby and it has turned into a little business - a nice little earner on the side. I make these and I've about a thousand of these [TURK'S HEAD FENDER]. They are sold at Cowes, St Mawes, Holkham Hall, Maldon, Sag Harbour, Rhode Island, in the US, The Virgin Islands, and Alicante in Spain, and much will be familiar but you maybe surprised that many people ashore are interested in the sailors ropework skills from the International Guild of Knot Tyers [SHOW PAMPHLET] these are the real experts.

The academics get really excited about rope theory called the greatest physics concept of all time developed from string theory chaos theory is demonstrated by a magnet tied to a hanging length of rope.

On a more earthly level - Prada and Louis Vuitton have leather workers who use these skills - and its in every aspect of fashion. I notice recently Habitat is selling half-hitched cushions and sword mats. There is even significance of ropework terminology in digital technology
a bit basic unit of information in computing and digital communications 0 or 1
a byte is a unit of digital information in computing and telecommunications that most commonly consists of eight bits.

Navigation is a key element of software design too you can earn big money if you understand all about navigation in software design.
But here is the real business - have I time to do more? I want to quickly try and demonstrate to you how these ropework skills of a sailor in Nelson's time are an example, an example to us all in the modern world, and most important could signify, explain & celebrate why the style of training and traditional skills - the hallmark of the training in the services and particularly the sea cadet corp - work so well.

This is my story; picture the scene - I am sitting on my riggers bench in the garden in Bengeo working away on 100 doorstops for a store in Tokyo and I'm thinking as I work I've already got a very good idea about how designing really good software programmes for children depends on how good the metaphors are and also how children moving things about on the computer screen gets them much more interested, from my PhD. Here I am working with a chunk of rope and its called a Turk's Head and thats a metaphor too and I can make this item really quickly because I think about the name and everything comes back to me -quickly, suddenly, the penny drops; this sailor's ropework is an example of how metaphors help us to learn.

The Turk's Head is a clear example of how a metaphor helps us learn - there's the fid, the marline spike, the belay pin, the monkeys fist and the real killer example The Bitter End page 288 of the Ashley Book of knots - metaphors must be useful for learning at least a shortcut to remembering. Metaphors aren't just a fancy name for words we use.

This is not all folks. A little more research and reading and I find out of course that some very eminent scientists think that metaphors are important in learning too but they are saying metaphor does not just help us learn - metaphors are the way we learn, full stop. This is all to do with neuroscience research - briefly, the way the mirror neurons and motor neurons cross on each side of the brain - they tie language and physical activity together. Language and physical activity together are essential for learning; metaphor is hard wired into the way we think - we don't even notice it is happening. Think of the implications for education!

But we all knew that anyway didn't we? Nothing is new - hand's on learning - learning on the job - is essential - you have to get work experience. Apprenticeships are a vital part of industry training oh, and - big surprise - the navy training is second to none. I wonder why? And of course why the sea cadet experience is so valuable - learning by doing, outdoor challenges, land based adventures, seamanship, meteorology, radio communications, and cookery to name but a few, and, of course, tying a Turk's Head too. You didn't really need me to tell you that do you sea cadets? You know it in your bones.

I don't know whether this is of any use but I enjoyed putting it together.

Kind Regards
Dr Mike Howarth
07778 537505
01992 587292
website http://www.mhmvr.co.uk

Walk Softly [continued from p. 20]

by Patrick Glisson

"50 Cal"

Straight shaft "Dress" walking cane, inspired by a "Swagger Stick", 38 inches long, wood cleaned of bark and finished with oil and wax. The top and bottom of wood is capped with a 50 caliber bass casing cut in half. Upper end of stick topped with a large 7 pass Monkey's Fist of black para cord attached to the rim end of the 50 caliber casing, the transition from brass to wood is covered with a 5 bight by 3 lead, 3 pass Turk's Head [***top photo***]. The lower end is finished with the neck and shoulder of the casing. The lower wood to brass transition is also covered with a 5 bight by 3 lead, 3 pass Turk's Head. A rubber plug is inserted in the end of the neck to provide traction.

In keeping with my belief that knotting is a both an Art and a Craft, the bulk of the knot work I do on walking sticks is intended to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing; hopefully I have succeeded.

FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDITOR

I have been remiss in not observing the time limits for members of the Executive Committee. As your Editor since December, 2008, I have been privileged to have been invited in that post to attend and take part in the works of the EC. I should have recognized that members of the EC are supposed to retire after 5 years of service, and it took a notice from the Chairman of the Trustees to let me know of my “sins”. I apologise wholeheartedly for having failed to move over - I will not let it happen again!

The last seven and one-half years have been MOST enjoyable, and a great privilege for me to have been afforded this position; I sincerely wish my successor(s) great joy also. As a volunteer, one soon discovers that there are varying demands in time and energy of this position, not the least of which demands is to understand the works that our authors have striven to produce, and to transliterate them to English or American prose, worthy of this noble institution.

On the center spread of this month’s Issue, I have placed several photographs of events and items reported over these last few years, for you all to enjoy your own works once more. It was an enjoyable effort and, again, I thank you for the trust and honor you placed on my shoulders.

Wishing you all fair leads, I remain,

Yours Sincerely,
Lindsey Philpott

WHY PEOPLE KNOW OF THE SHEEP-SHANK

by
Des Pawson, MBE

Sir Henry Mainwaring, naval officer, professional seaman, privateer and pirate, had returned to England, where he was pardoned by the King and subsequently knighted in 1618. Plans for him to enter the service of Venice fell through and, in 1620, he was given the post of Lieutenant of Dover Castle and Deputy Warden of the Cinque Ports.

During the next 2 years he took time to write down everything he knew about seamanship. Mainwaring gave a copy of his manuscript to Lord Buckingham, the Lord High Admiral, as well as a number of other leading naval commanders and powerful people. These manuscripts, titled with variations on the title “*Nomenclator Navalis or an Exact Collection and Exposition of all words and Tearmes of Art belonging to the Parts, Qualities, Conditions Proportions, Rigging, Fitting, Managing and Sayling of Shipps; with other Necessaries to be knowne in the Practique of Navigation. Also including so much of the Art of Gunnery as concerns the Use of Ordinance at Sea*”, are today referred to as “*The Seaman’s Dictionary*”, the title given to them when later published in book form.

In these manuscripts, he spoke of just two sorts of knots, the *Bowling* (Bowline) *Knot* and the *Wale* (Wall) *Knot*, but he made special separate mention of SHEEPSHANKS. “*Sheepshanks is a kind of knot which they cast upon a runner when it is too long, so that they cannot hoist in the goods over the ship’s sides unless it be shortened; and by this knot they can quickly shorten it up as much as they list, and instantly undo it again*”.

Why, one wonders, did he do this? There must have been more important knots that were used. Perhaps they were considered too mundane and the Sheepshank was included because of its rather strange name.

Not long afterwards, in 1626, Captain John Smith, some-time Governor of Virginia, used Mainwaring's manuscript as the basis of his "*Sea-mans Grammar*", including almost word for word Mainwaring's description of the Sheepshank, after mention of the Bowline and the Wall Knot, "Lastly is the Sheepshank which is a knot they cast upon a runner or Tackle when it is too long to take in the goods, and, by this knot, they can shorten a Rope without cutting it, as much as they list, and presently undo it again, and yet never the worse".

A couple of years later in 1634, Nathaniel Boteler (Butler), another seaman, governor and privateer, took these sources of information and re-configured them as "*Boteler's Dialogues*".

"ADMIRAL. What be your Sheep-shanks?
CAPTAIN. This is the kind of knot, cast upon a runner when it is too long which runner is a running rope, for otherwise the goods or Victuals cannot be hoisted in, over the ship's sides; and by this knot called the sheepshanks, this runner is upon all occasions shortened at pleasure, and as easefully lengthened".

Once again this was first circulated as a manuscript and later published as a book in 1685.

Finally in 1644, Mainwaring's "Seaman's Dictionary" was published as an actual book. But the book was full of mistakes including mixing Sheers with Sheepshanks as Sheer Shanks, then giving the description for Sheers, rather than Sheepshanks. It is possible that there was a second edition in 1666 which may have had corrections, but no trace can be found; perhaps it was lost in the Great Fire of London.

However, Mainwaring's manuscripts had done their work and the Sheepshank was released in print on the world by firstly Smith and later Boteler.

These works, all containing the Sheepshank, ensured that this knot, or perhaps more precisely this hitch, needed to be included in Falconers "*Marine Dictionary*" of 1769 and, when David Steel was trawling around for information to go into his major work the "*Elements of Rigging and Sailmaking*" 1795, he of course included the Sheepshank and, for the first time, illustrated it. So, obviously, in 1808, Darcy Lever in his "*Young Sea Officers Sheet Anchor*" had to follow suit.

Between them these early writers ensured that, whatever its usefulness, the sheepshank was destined to be forever included in any book that deals with knots. Indeed there have developed many variations of the sheepshank, with additional hitches, seizings or toggles, some with names such as the Naval or Man-o-war sheepshank even one with the romantic name of Two Hearts Beat as One.

The Sheepshank's rather curious name has stuck in people's minds, even if they cannot tie it. The name being so powerful that sometimes people refer to Sheep Bend when they mean Sheet Bend, a knot that is extremely old and useful, but that is another story.

©Des Pawson April 2012 originally published in Marine Quarterly #8

The Sex of Knots

by John Shaw

‘The bowline is the King of Knots, because
it is strong, secure, and versatile, as kings should be.
And simple, as kings generally are.’
(Brion Toss, IGKT, The Rigger’s Apprentice, 1984)

Some knot tyers who aver ‘***The bowline is the King of Knots***’ may have come to that conclusion after agreeable experiences with this fixed loop, but more likely they caught the saying from others – like many an infectious urban myth – unaware of how it originated. The soubriquet is from a 1930s poem (***The Bow-line***) by the English humourist, novelist, playwright, law reform activist and independent member of the English parliament A.P. (Sir Alan) Herbert, who was also a Freeman of the Company of Watermen & Lightermen.

Subsequently John Sweet, in his 1974 book ***Scout Pioneering*** referred to the Alpine Butterfly knot as ‘***the Queen of Knots***’. Might we apply this sexual differentiation to other knots? Maybe not, because most knots, bends and hitches are uncooperatively either androgynous or gender-neutral.

A sexologist named Wisteria
wondered what intrinsic criteria
defined a knot’s gender,
a maddening mind-bender,
that had her in fits of hysteria.

A great many languages do have gender for inorganic things. In French it features as a grammatical need for nouns to agree with other parts of speech. For example, un cul-de-porc (a wall knot) is masculine, but une téte de more (a crown knot) is feminine. Anything with the word noeud (knot) is male: un noeud de sac (a sac knot), un noeud d’étrangleur (a strangle knot), un noeud de péecheur (a fisherman’s knot); whereas une poignet de coffer (a chest handle) and une téte de cloche (a bell rope) are both female.

An obsessive indexer named Rex
Tried to catalogue knots by their sex.
But la difference
Proved ‘iffy’ in France,
With a grammar to vex and perplex.

Still, even if it is not possible to discern masculine or feminine characteristics in all knots, you might still acclaim your favourite as (let’s say) ‘the Emperor, or Empress, of knots’. Send your nominations to KM’s editor.

2016 Meeting Plans

THE IGKT 2016 AGM
KNOTTING 4 ALL
2K16
Will be held in Fareham, Hampshire, UK.
From Tuesday 3 May to Sunday 8 May 2016.
Detailed information is on inserts with this issue of Knotting Matters.

Provisional Programme

Fareham Sailing Club

Tuesday 3 May	Informal workshops and get together
Wednesday 4 May	Informal workshops and get together
Thursday 5 May	Informal workshops and get together
Musical evening	(Bring your voice and/or instrument)

Ferneham Hall

Friday 6 May	Registration
	Set up displays, Workshops and talks
	Raffle
Delme Arms	IGKT Evening social (Bar food available)
Ferneham Hall	
Saturday 7 May	Registration
	AGM 1030-1200
	Public Exhibition 1300-1700
	Raffle
	Dinner & Entertainment
	Grand Draw
Sunday 8 May	Auction & Departure

Tentative Meeting planned in Charleston, South Carolina:
When: November 4-6, 2016 NAB meeting in Charleston SC.

Where: Aboard the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown, CV10.
It is just across the river from the city and aquarium.

Hotel plans are being finalized with it very close to the Yorktown.
Plans now are calling for a visit to a local Rigging shop, Charleston Riggers, on Friday or when we want to do it. They have a 30 foot testing bed, read mega ton, and we should be able to break some line!
Possible reception onboard the Spirit of South Carolina, if they are not out on a cruise.
We will also be arranging deals for the museums and plantation if anyone wants to visit them before or after the meeting.

We are also planning the same type of dinner as before. An oyster roast, BBQ and a Shrimp Boil. Still too early on location and final meal details.

Our Spirit Knot Tyers group will also be trying to bring in some Guild members who live about 2 – 3 hours away. We plan on doing about three boat shows together.

Call or write to Dan Machowski, former IGKT President, for more information

North American Branch Meets with Marlinespike Skills Class

by
Gary Summers, Instructor

We had Guild members from Maine, Michigan, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Colorado and California at our latest Marlinespike Skills Class meeting. The class was held in Camp Belzer, Indianapolis, Indiana on March 4 - 6, 2016. 1st row, left to right. Scott “Sully” Sullivan, Lily Morales, Ricky French, Rick French, John DeWilde, Terry Fulner and Gary Summers.
2nd row, Chip Platt, Dakorie McElhaney. 3rd row, John “Rusty” Helms, Joe Bates, Larry McCammon, Patrick Glisson, Dave Largent, Brad Cotton, Mike Foster. Top row, Paul Zimmermann, Eric Wickizer, Ron Last and Keith Kohanzo. Randy Cox not shown.

We had 48 learners and staff for the weekend. We start at 8 on Friday night and finish around noon on Sunday. Although we do not consider this a Guild meeting, we have a very large group of members, most of whom joined because of attending Marlinspike Skills.

Photograph above shows what the second year learners accomplished. 4 students participating. The photograph below shows what the Alumni Group achieved. They do whatever they wish. There were 13 Alumni participants.

CANADA

PRIME MINISTER·PREMIER MlNlSTRE

Ottawa, Ontario K1A OA2

FEB 2 9 2016

Dear Natalie:

I want to personally congratulate you for becoming, along with Draik, one of the two fastest knot tyers in the world. You should be very proud for displaying the perseverance and dedication to your craft that it took to accomplish this feat.

Beyond your knot tying skills, however, I want to recognize you for receiving the Chief Scout's Award, an achievement that requires exceptional leadership skills and hard work. Your contributions to Scouts Canada are truly admirable.

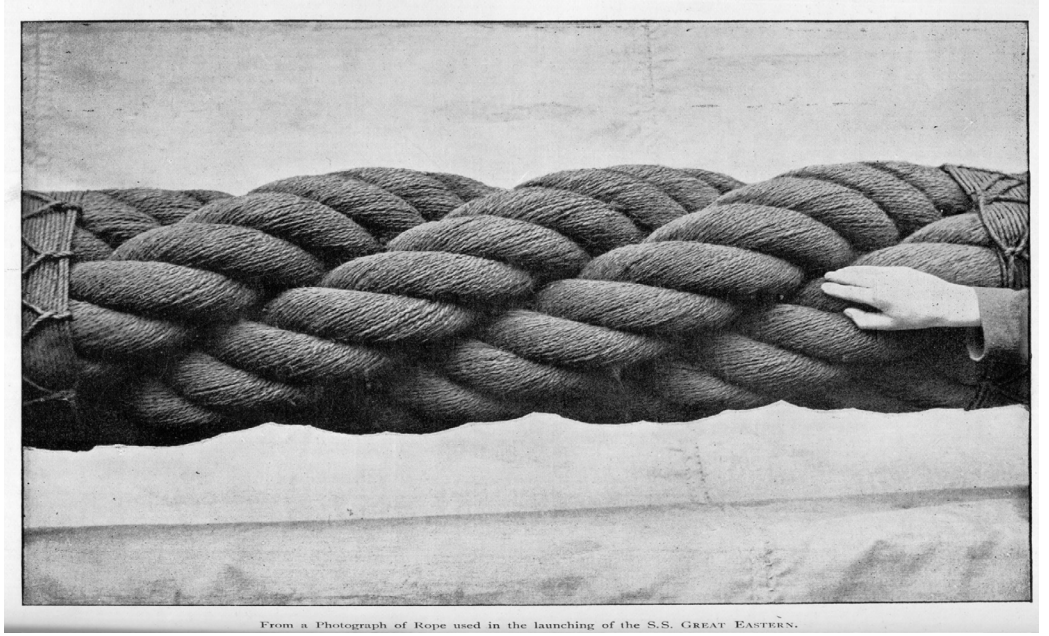
Congratulations once again on your remarkable accomplishments, and I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Ms. Natalie Gordon

I have found the image [***below***] and the details from HIPKINS.W.E. The Wire Rope & its Applications; J. & E. Wright Ltd, Birmingham, 1896., which states "The accompanying illustration is from a photograph of a piece of the Coir Cable manufactured by J.& E. Wright, and used in Launching of the Great Eastern Steamship. It was 47inches (119cm) in Circumference, was comprised of 4 strands and contained no less than 3780 yarns; it is one of the largest ropes ever produced.

Des Pawson



From a Photograph of Rope used in the launching of the S.S. GREAT EASTERN.

Caption reads "From a photograph of rope used in the launching of SS Great Eastern"
I wonder where it is now?

Door Stopper Advice

by
Cazbil

The door slammed once too often so, take one tin of dog meat (empty!) a length of rope, start and finish with a whipping, with a bit of hitching in between, fill with sand, an inch of cement on top with spliced handle in it, pour a bit of floor paint on top of that, job done at minimal cost!

Best Regards,
Cazbil.

Pope in Pennsylvania

by Dan Cashin

Hello Folks

With the Pope's visit to the Philadelphia area, this story was in a local suburban newspaper. I thought you might enjoy it. What it doesn't talk about is the Gordian Knot the roads around town turn into!
Stay Untangled
Dan Cashin, Havertown Pa.

Lansdale Pa. Reporter

B1 RELIGION

Saturday, August 22, 2015 » MORE AT FACEBOOK.COM/LANSREPORTER AND TWITTER.COM/LANSREPORTER

PAPAL VISIT

For Pope Francis' visit, artists collect 30,000 symbolic knots

By Kathy Matheson
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA » Artists are finishing construction of an unusual exhibit they hope resonates with Pope Francis during his trip to Philadelphia and with anyone experiencing trouble in their daily life.

When it opens Sept. 3, the grotto outside the city's Roman Catholic cathedral will house more than 30,000 knots, each representing a personal hardship or societal challenge.

"It's deeply moving to see the universal quality of these struggles," said lead artist Meg Saligman.

Organizers are crossing their fingers that Francis, who celebrates Mass at the basilica on Sept. 26, will visit the installation because it's inspired by one of his favorite paintings, "Mary, Undoer of Knots." The artwork shows her untangling a long ribbon — a symbol for smoothing life's difficulties.

Knots for the project have been gathered worldwide. At a recent public event outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art, passers-by wrote their burdens on strips of cloth and then tied the fabric in a knot. Challenges ranged from addictions to student loans to health problems.

Participants were then invited to undo someone else's knot — to symbolically share that person's hardship — and weave it through a loom for all to see.

"I thought it was nice to be aware of someone else's pains, someone else's struggles, and that you're not alone," said Abigail Quintos of Rochester, New York. "A lot of other people are going through tough times in their lives."

Quintos' own knot addressed the strain of living so far away from her family; the one she untied dealt with an individual's housing and child custody hardships.

Lisa Cerasaro's knot concerned what she described as the scourge of corporate greed in America. When she randomly reached for another person's knot, it turned out to be in Spanish — which she doesn't understand.

"But I'm just weaving it in, wishing good thoughts for that person," said Cerasaro, of Middletown, New Jersey.

Francis is scheduled to visit Philadelphia on Sept. 26 and 27 to close out the World Meeting of Families, a triennial Catholic conference focused on strengthening family bonds.

ONLINE:
mercyandjustice.org/knots
worldmeeting2015.org

Artist Meg Saligman shows knots tied to a mock-up of an art installation at her studio in Philadelphia. The project will greet Pope Francis and millions of others when they travel to Philadelphia this fall.

MATT SLOCUM — THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Branch Meetings Details

Alaskan Branch
Every Thu. evening 6:00 to 8:00
Anchorage Senior Center
1300 E 19th Ave., Anchorage, AK
Contact Charles Rigden
Tel: (1) 928/231-4775

Dorset Branch
Contact: Peter Goldstone
+44 (0) 1725516258
goldstone@aol.com
Royal Dorset Yacht Club,
11 Custom House Quay, Weymouth,
Dorset DT4 8BG
2nd Wednesday of each month
1930 - 2100 hrs

East Anglian Branch
Contact: Stuart Weston
152 Kittiwake Court, Stowmarket, Suffolk
IP14 5GS
01449 674327
07801 239731
pugwash1941@gmail.com

French Branch
Contact Jean-Pierre Durand
06 64 00 66 91
durand0547@orange.fr
www.igktfrance.com

German Branch
Contact: Matthias Boeving
Tel.: +49 208 3075171
info@knotengilde.de
Deutsche Sektion
e.V. c/o Schiffahrtsmuseum,
Schiffbruecke 39, 24939
Flensburg, Germany

Midlands Branch
The Old Swan, Netherton
Contact: Bruce Turley
Tel: 0121 453 4124

Northwest Branch
Meeting the second Thursday of each month, in the Red Lion at Winsford from 1200 to 1600 hrs, and the 3rd Wed. at Ellesmere Port Boat Museum from 1100 to 1400 hrs; contact either Paul or Ian at rope.what.knot@gmail.com Evening or weekend meetings could be set up for those unable to be here at lunch-time.

Netherlands
Every last Saturday (except Dec.)
De Hoop, Rotterdam
Contact: Frits Ottens
Tel: +31(0)587850011
Fruitstraat 58, 8933 GR Leeuwarden,
Netherlands
E-mail: frits.efina@telfort.nl

NAB - Mid-Atlantic Region
Contact: Michael Pollock

NAB - Knot in the Middle
Contact: Rusty Helms

Pacific Americas Branch
Second Tuesday of each month
At the Los Angeles Maritime Institute
(upstairs or in their store)
San Pedro, California
Contact: Jimmy Williams
Tel: (1) 310/679-6864
e-mail: igktpab@gmail.com

Solent Branch
Second Tues. of even-number months
Fareham Sailing and Motor Boat Club
Fareham, Hants, UK
Contact: Chris Jenkins
Hon.Sec. Solent Branch IGKT
E: igktchris@btinternet.com
T: +44(0)2392 601779

Surrey Branch
Meetings are held at Guildford District Scout Centre, Nightingale Road, Guildford, starting at 20:00 hrs. Please phone for more details
Contact: Tony Shellard
Tel: +44(0) 1483 502 156
www.surreyknots.org.uk

Sweden
Contact: Christoffer Åström
Tel: +46 736 381 731
E-mail: christoffer@knopar.se

West Country Knotters
Last Sat. of odd months @13:00 hrs
The Benjamin Perry Boathouse Activity and Training Centre
Phoenix Wharf, Lower Guinea Street,
Bristol BS1 6TJ
Contact: Richard Hopkins for directions
Tel: 0117 986 7146
May be subject to change - call first

Yorkshire Branch
Contact: David Pearson
Tel: 0113 257 2689

Is your Branch represented correctly here? Sometimes Branch contacts are listed with a complete telephone number, e-mail address and even a mailing address, but not always. If the details here are sufficient for you - or for a visiting IGKT member - then nothing further need be said or done. If not, do write or e-mail the Editor to discuss details, which we will endeavour to get corrected, when it is received in time for publication. Thanks!

Back Cover - Members' work on the back covers from December 2008 to December 2015 - well done all of you! - Ed

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